

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2, 4, 5, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harvey et al. (US Patent No. 6,784,901) in view of Komata (US Patent Publication No. 2001/0008850).

Claims 6 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harvey/Komata in view of Finkelstein et al. (US Patent No. 6,025,841).

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harvey/Komata in view of McKinnon et al. (US Patent No. 6,392,667).

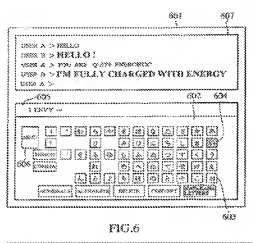
I. ARGUMENTS

A. The Present Invention

As previously discussed, various embodiments of the present invention allows a user to monitor the "strength" of messages then generate. Importantly, in various embodiments, the "strength" can be dynamically and automatically determined for every sent or received message.

In various embodiments, as was discussed, the font size of a message is determined in response to an "operation strength" of the user for a message. The message is then illustrated using the determined font size. Specifically, the specification states:

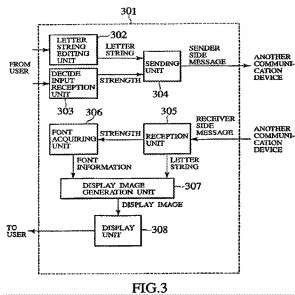
In step S408, changes in the pressure of pushing the circle button 205 when deciding to send may be followed in a small time unit, and the font size of the letters to be displayed in the letter string presentation area 605 may be changed in accordance with the pressure in each time unit, so that the user can confirm how the information to be sent by him/herself will be displayed on the partner's side and in the log display area 607 on the side of the user him/herself.).
P.18,127-p.18,15. Emphasis added.



Additionally, in various embodiments, the “strength” of the user for message is determined for every individual message, and may be based upon unconscious feeling of the sender. The strength of the message can also be reviewed prior to sending. Specifically, the specification states:

By designing the user interface so that an edited letter string message is sent in response to a pushing operation to the circle button 205 as described above, a user shows a tendency that when he/she gets excited and emotional and thus wants to transmit a message with a strong willpower, he/she pushes the circle button 205 with a strong power without knowing it him/herself. P.20,1.5-8. Emphasis added.

As illustrated in Fig. 3, strength information for each message may be determined for every message (block 303) that is sent, and every message that is received (block 306):



Claim 2, as amended, is directed to reflecting such functionality. More specifically, claim 2, as amended, now recites:

a font acquiring unit that acquires font information designating a font having a size which is pre-associated with the average or the weighed average of the operation strength thereby the user presses the keys or the buttons for inputting the edit instruction and the strength information specified in the receiver side message received from said another communication device every time the user presses any of the keys or the buttons or said reception unit receives a receiver side message;

Additionally, it is noted that claim 2, as amended, recites:

a display image generation unit that generates a display image every time the user presses any key of the keys or the buttons or said reception unit receives a receiver side message, by depicting the letter string to be edited currently with the acquired font for the average or the weighed average of the operation strength and depicting the letter string specified in the receiver side message with the acquired font for the strength information specified in the receiver side message.

Additionally, it is noted that claim 2, currently recites:

a reception unit that receives a receiver side message specifying a letter string to be displayed and strength information from another communication device communicably connected to said communication device via the computer network;

B. The Cited Art

1. **Harvey**

As previously discussed, Harvey merely describes a chat system where a default font size for messages are used. The undersigned agrees with the Examiner's previous assertion that that Harvey fails to disclose a font acquiring unit or determining a font size based upon the user strength or pressure of a controller.

2. **Komata**

As also previously discussed, Komata relates to a "love simulation game," where the player interacts with computer-controlled characters.

Importantly, Komata merely describes a computer game with which a human player interacts with. Komata does not appear to disclose a player interacting with other human players. Any "messages" from computer-controlled characters are not dependent upon "operation strength" of "receiver side messages," because the computer does not determine "strength information."

Additionally, as illustrated in Fig. 3, any emotion input is based upon specific set of player operations (left column). These player operations are made completely independent from the player generating the message:

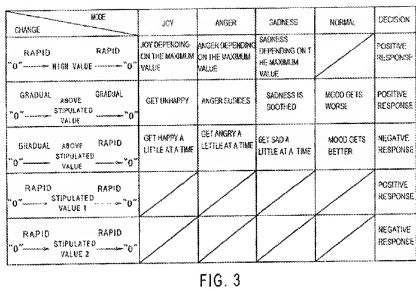


FIG. 3

C. The Cited Art Distinguished.

1. Claim 2

Claim 2 is not obvious in light of Harvey in view of Komata. More specifically, the combination does not even present a prima-facie case of obviousness.

Neither Harvey or Komata disclose a font acquiring unit that acquires font information designating a font having a size which is pre-associated with the average or the weighed average of the operation strength thereby the user presses the keys or the buttons for inputting the edit instruction and the strength information specified in the receiver side message received from said another communication device every time the user presses any of the keys or the buttons or said reception unit receives a receiver side message, as recited in claim 2.

Initially, Harvey does not disclose changing a font size in response to any strength or pressure of a controller, or any message, as the Examiner agreed.

Komata also does not teach this limitation either. As shown above, Komata does not mention that the "strength information" is based upon "every time the user presses any of the keys." Instead, as illustrated in Komata, Fig. 3, the player specifically enters emotion or volition, by performing actions, which are separate from the player generating a message.

In contrast, as illustrated, Fig. 2 recites the “strength information” is specified “every time the user presses any of the keys or buttons” for “inputting the edit instruction.” As described in the embodiments of the specification in the present patent application, the “strength information” can be determined based upon unconscious feelings of the user, as manifested by the duration of presses of the user when writing the message.

Additionally, neither Harvey of Komata disclose a display image generation unit that generates a display image ~~every time the user presses any key of the keys or the buttons~~ or said reception unit receives a receiver side message, by depicting the letter string to be edited currently with the acquired font for the average or the weighed average of the operation strength and depicting the letter string specified in the receiver side message with the acquired font for the strength information specified in the receiver side message.

As described above, Harvey does not disclose changing a font size in response to any strength or pressure of a controller, or any message, as the Examiner agreed.

Additionally, as discussed, Komata does not disclose obtaining strength information based upon “every time the user presses any key of the keys or the buttons.”

Komata also fails to disclose a reception unit that receives a receiver side message specifying a letter string to be displayed and strength information from another communication device communicably connected to said communication device via the computer network. As discussed above, Komata does not disclose interaction with another player, thus there is no “another communication device.”

Furthermore, the two cited arts are completely in different arts. Harvey relates to a chat system between individuals, and Komata relates to a solo user playing a game. In Komata, the emotion or volition of a player is the primary input into the “love simulation” game, where interaction is with a computer program, and “emotions or volitions” are specifically entered. In other words, in Komata, “emotion” is not made by the player unconsciously. (It is assumed that no player actually “loves” a computer character.) In contrast, in Harvey, the primary focus is an interactive chat system with other users, where the textual chat is the primary focus of the chat system. Accordingly, the cited arts are not even directed towards the same problem or issues.

2. Remaining Claims

Claims 4,5,6,7, 8 and 9 dependent upon claim 2 are also asserted to be allowable, for substantially the same reasons as claim 1, and more specifically, for the specific limitations they recite.

Independent claims 12 and 14 are also asserted to be allowable, for substantially the same reasons as claim 2, and more specifically, for the specific limitations they recite.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

/Stephen Y. Pang/

Stephen Y. Pang
Reg. No. 38,575

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, Eighth Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 650-326-2400 Fax: 415-576-0300
SYP:djb
61472508 v1